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United Nations Decade of Sustainable Energy for All

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The United Nations Decade of Sustainable Energy for All, 2014-2024, represents a valuable opportunity for all stakeholders to gather around a common platform to take further action and complement activities and synergies ensuring progress towards the overall objective of sustainable energy for all. In line with the strategic objectives outlined in the global plan of action for the Decade, the present report highlights activities undertaken by a wide range of stakeholders to accelerate action towards making sustainable energy for all a reality, including actions by Member States and efforts by the United Nations system and by relevant international organizations contributing towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 71/233, in which the Assembly took note of the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Decade of Sustainable Energy for All and requested the Secretary-General to prepare, in consultation with Member States and other relevant stakeholders, a report on the activities carried out to mark the Decade and related activities within the United Nations system, for submission to the General Assembly at its seventy-second session.

II. Global plan of action for the Decade and its alignment with the 2030 Agenda

2. In 2012, the General Assembly unanimously approved resolution 67/215, by which it declared 2014-2024 the Decade of Sustainable Energy for All, underscoring the importance of energy issues for sustainable development and for the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda.

3. The strategic objectives of the global plan of action for the Decade, which were originally presented in 2014 in the report of the Secretary-General on the Decade (A/69/395) and endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 69/225, focused on:

(a) Catalysing actions at all levels to transform the world's energy systems towards an equitable and sustainable future: all stakeholders should lead by example, by setting their own goals and targets on energy and its nexus with other development factors; by establishing proactive policies, regulatory frameworks and incentives to spur innovation and investment; by facilitating the building of market structures to deliver sustainable energy solutions and services over time; by dramatically increasing bottom-up solutions; by expanding capacity-building: by promoting partnerships; by enhancing research and development; and disseminating information on experiences and lessons learned;

(b) Creating an enabling environment for a significant increase in investment in the world's energy systems: the International Energy Agency estimated that nearly $1 trillion in cumulative investment was needed to achieve universal energy access by 2030,[1] and massive investments in renewable energy and energy efficiency were necessary in order to reach the global energy goals of the Sustainable Energy for All initiative;

(c) Catalysing overall investment in the world's energy systems: public-private partnerships will be essential to mobilizing the massive investment needed for the global transformation of energy systems and it would be essential to use public investment in order to leverage the private investment that was required to achieve that transformation;

(d) Increasing support for research and development: Governments and the private sector would need to support efforts to drive technological innovation and reduce the cost of clean energy technologies to make them increasingly attractive all over the world in terms of economics;

(e) Continuing to expand global consultations with all stakeholders, both in developing and in developed countries: civil society, businesses, young people and Governments should continue dialogue to ensure that the perspectives of all

[1] International Energy Agency, *World Energy Outlook 2012: Executive Summary* (Paris, 2012).

stakeholders were appropriately captured and incorporated into the Decade programme, the post-2015 development agenda and other relevant processes;

(f) Creating more incentives for a change in behaviour to manage and allocate resources in a more sustainable manner: activities relating to the Decade should promote sustainable energy production and consumption so that energy resources were used in a more equitable manner;

(g) Expanding data and statistical programmes in developing countries: more work was needed on energy-integrated targets, indicators and definitions and on identifying data needs to capture the many dimensions and interlinkages and to ensure national relevance and measurability, and the Sustainable Energy for All Global Tracking Framework could provide support in that respect;

(h) Expanding and increasing partnerships and commitments: actions and programmes relating to the Decade should seek to expand current partnerships and coalitions and secure new partnerships and commitments for interim goals by 2024 and beyond;

(i) Enhancing dissemination of knowledge, commitments and solutions: the Decade should provide a platform for Governments and non-governmental actors to disseminate knowledge and showcase and announce contributions and solutions that accelerate the ultimate goal of sustainable energy for all.

4. In 2015, one year after the endorsement of the global plan of action for the Decade, a set of landmark agreements was reached: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement adopted under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development. Together, they collectively represent a transformational agenda for a sustainable future.

5. The 2030 Agenda includes the first-ever universal goal on energy, Sustainable Development Goal 7, with targets on energy access, renewable energy, energy efficiency and means of implementation. The scale and ambition of the Goal and its related targets require an intensive global engagement across all sectors of society. Building on the achievements to date, the Decade can, and must, play an instrumental role in bringing together all stakeholders to make the achievement of Goal 7 a reality.

6. In that context, the present report highlights the activities undertaken by a wide range of stakeholders in support of the Decade, including actions by Member States and efforts by the United Nations system and by relevant international organizations. In order to demonstrate the strategic alignment of the global plan of action for the Decade with the 2030 Agenda, the report places emphasis on the following aspects: (a) enabling environments; (b) data and monitoring; (c) finance and investment, (d) capacity-building; (e) advocacy; and (f) partnerships.

III. Accelerating the implementation of the global plan of action for sustainable energy for all

7. Member States undertook a wide variety of activities and initiatives in support of the Decade. While those actions cover a broad range of areas, they all contribute significantly to the acceleration of the necessary transformation of global energy systems, at both the national and international levels. Inputs regarding Member State contributions to the objectives of the Decade were received from Argentina, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, China, Cuba, Germany, Guatemala, India, Italy, Mexico, Monaco, the Russian Federation and Slovakia. In addition, inputs were

received from organizations of the United Nations system and other relevant international organizations regarding their activities in support of the Decade.

A. Enabling environment

8. Member States and international organizations are taking bold action to accelerate the transformation of energy systems. This includes the creation of national agendas with tailored targets in line with global agreements, the establishment of robust institutional, implementation and monitoring frameworks, the provision of stable policy environments to allow long-term planning and investment, the promotion of greater transparency and the development of markets with well-considered, transparent and consistently applied incentives, standards, labels and other regulatory measures developed with stakeholder consultation.

9. Examples of national strategies, goals and targets include the following:

(a) National policies in Argentina that focus on promoting energy efficiency, developing adequate low-carbon infrastructure, reducing inefficient fossil fuel subsidies, improving access to sustainable and modern energy for all and advancing the implementation of its intended nationally determined contribution;

(b) Azerbaijan launched a strategic road map for the development of utility services, with a long-term vision towards 2025 and beyond. Azerbaijan is taking steps to expand the use of renewable energy, in line with its national target to reduce carbon emissions by 35 per cent by 2030, using the 1990 baseline;

(c) Belarus set a target of increasing the share of primary energy production from renewable energy sources in the energy mix to 6 per cent by 2020, 7 per cent by 2025 and 8 per cent by 2030;

(d) Cuba has aimed to increase renewable energy sources to 24 per cent of the electricity generation mix by 2030;

(e) Germany has set ambitious targets within the framework of its energy transition, *Energiewende*, including abandoning nuclear power by 2022, increasing the share of renewable energies in electricity supply to 80 per cent by 2050 and decreasing greenhouse gas emissions by 80 to 90 per cent by 2050 (compared with 1990 levels);

(f) India has committed to increase the share of non-fossil fuel power generation capacity to 40 per cent and to reduce the emissions intensity of the economy by 33 to 35 per cent by 2030, measured against the baseline from 2005. India also aims to provide a continuous and reliable supply of electricity to its citizens by 2022;

(g) Mexico has set ambitious targets, including achieving 99.8 per cent electrification of the country by 2024, reducing the annual intensity of final energy consumption by 1.9 per cent for the period 2016-2030 and ensuring that, 63 per cent of new infrastructure for electricity generation over the next 15 years comes from clean energy sources;

(h) Monaco, in line with its commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 50 per cent by 2030, created the energy transition programme in 2016, with the aim of promoting renewable energy and energy efficiency;

(i) The Russian Federation, in its revision of its national energy strategy, reaffirms its objectives of providing stable energy resources for the period up to 2035, expanding the use of renewable energy sources and improving energy efficiency and adopting advanced technology;

(j) Slovakia approved its energy policy in 2014, defining the strategic objectives of achieving competitive low-carbon energy and providing a secure, reliable and efficient supply of all forms of energy at affordable prices, taking into account customer protection and sustainable development.

10. Examples of policy and regulatory frameworks include the following:

(a) Belarus has developed a regulatory framework for the use of renewable energy sources, creating favourable investment conditions, including a number of tax breaks for the expansion of electricity generation from renewable energy sources;

(b) Guatemala has taken action to promote renewable energy, which has resulted in an increase in electricity generated from renewable energy sources from 8,147 GWh to 10,878 GWh from 2011 to 2016, which currently accounts for about 60per cent of total electricity generation. Guatemala is also making progress on energy access: in 2016 access to electricity increased to 92 per cent, up from 84 per cent in 2011;

(c) The renewable energy sector of Italy benefits from a stable regulatory framework, which has led to an increase of the share of energy from renewable energy sources to up to 41.6 per cent of the total national energy production;

(d) Monaco is developing revised energy regulations for new and existing buildings;

(e) The Russian Federation has created a regulatory framework for energy efficiency, which increased the total volume of subsidies from the federal budget for the implementation of regional energy efficiency programmes to almost $700 million from 2011 to 2014.

11. Organizations of the United Nations system and other international organizations are joining efforts to facilitate policy dialogue on sustainable energy, identify financing options and ensure synergy with intended nationally determined contributions under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

12. With the adoption and rapid entry into force of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change continues to provide support to developing countries to facilitate their transition to a sustainable energy future, including through support for technical examination of policy options with high mitigation potential and adaptation, health and sustainable development co-benefits.

13. The Regional Commissions, through their committees on energy and a number of energy projects, continue to enhance international dialogue and cooperation and provide regional perspectives on energy issues.

B. Data and monitoring

14. Effective planning, follow up and review of the implementation of activities related to the Decade require the collection, processing, analysis and dissemination of an unprecedented amount of data and statistics at the local, national, regional and global levels. Good-quality and timely data are vital to enabling Governments to plan and monitor the impact of their policies, including through benchmarking data and monitoring year-on-year progress. Shared indicators and statistical frameworks can further help countries to see how they are doing compared with others.

15. There is a wide range of statistical capacity among countries, with individual countries setting their own national data and monitoring priorities. This

modernization and strengthening effort will require the full, active and focused commitment of government policy leaders. In this regard, some countries have initiated or implemented projects to improve data availability and quality in the energy sector. Some specific examples include the following:

(a) India has initiated steps to develop national indicators for Sustainable Development Goals, including Goal 7. In addition, as part of the efforts to promote transparency and accountability, some mobile applications for sharing real-time information with citizens have been launched, including on monitoring rural electrification and LED lighting distribution and mapping of current energy demand;

(b) Mexico has implemented a public access platform to provide statistical and geographical information showing the potential for renewable energy and electricity generation from non-fossil fuel energy sources;

(c) Monaco intends to reinforce the continued installation of smart electricity meters and sharing the collected data;

(d) In the energy policy of Slovakia, one of the priorities is ensuring good-quality and rigorous measurement, monitoring and evaluation of energy efficiency.

C. Finance and investment

16. Member States have reported various actions to catalyse financing, which include approaches and instruments to identify financial gaps, foster new partnerships between the Government and the private sector, strengthen international cooperation, align regulations and enable innovative instruments to promote risk sharing and accountability. A number of international organizations are also taking action in this area, including through direct investment in energy projects and development of energy financing toolkits. Some notable examples include the following:

(a) Azerbaijan has identified approximately 1 billion manats in investment for the construction of power plants, pursuant to the national priority on renewable energy;

(b) China has called for efforts among Member States to jointly foster open and transparent global trade and investment governance to cement the multilateral trading regime and unleash the potential of global cooperation in economy, trade and investment;

(c) Germany contributes to the mobilization of private capital through various tailor-made instruments, including the Global Energy Transfer Feed-in Tariffs (GET FiT) Programme, geothermal energy risk facilities, the Renewable Energy Cooperation Programme and the Regional Liquidity Support Facility. Furthermore, Germany, during its presidency of the Group of 20 in 2017, commissioned a joint study of the International Energy Agency and the International Renewable Energy Agency on the theme "Perspectives for the energy transition: investment needs for a low-carbon energy system". Results of the study are positive: energy transition is technically feasible and economically viable;

(d) India started about $15 billion worth of projects in 2015 and 2016, including $4.5 billion on power grids. India also launched a system designed to provide a continuous power supply to rural areas, with a total investment of $11.4 billion, as well as a system for integrated power development with a total financial outlay of $9.8 billion;

(e) Italy is financing energy-related projects in Africa, the Middle East and Latin America, where energy access is essential for sustainable economic and human development. The Ministry of the Environment of Italy allocated €18.7 million for energy projects in Africa;

(f) Mexico launched the Universal Electric Service Fund with a contribution of 3 million pesos, financing electrification in rural and marginalized urban areas. Mexico also aims to quadruple its investment in research and development for clean energy technologies, investing up to $310 million over five years in geothermal, solar energy, wind energy, bioenergy, marine energy, smart grids and carbon capture;

(g) In the Russian Federation, the cooperation between the Government and the private sector resulted in $700 million in subsidies for the implementation of regional energy efficiency programmes from 2011 to 2014;

(h) The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, in collaboration with the Economic Commission for Europe, is implementing a capacity-building project that seeks to increase renewable energy investments in Member States in the context of climate change mitigation, with activities that are planned in accordance with the objectives of the Decade;

(i) The World Bank Group financing of the energy sector totalled $11.5 billion in 2016. Of that amount, about $2.9 billion was for renewable energy and energy efficiency projects and programmes;

(j) The International Renewable Energy Agency, in its report entitled "Unlocking renewable energy investment: the role of risk mitigation and structured finance", identified the main risks and barriers limiting investment and provided a toolkit for policymakers, public and private investors and public finance institutions to scale up their investments in renewable energy. The "Remap" programme implemented by the Agency focuses on identifying the realistic potential of renewable energy until 2030 and beyond in all parts of the global energy system and quantifies renewables in terms of their cost and investment and their contribution to the climate and environmental objectives. The programme has grown to include 70 countries which account for more than 90 per cent of global energy use.

D. Capacity-building

17. Effective capacity-building will be a determining factor in the transition towards cleaner, affordable and sustainable energy systems that can benefit all. Action by Member States to support strengthening of capacity include the provision of technical assistance to Governments, companies and organizations; efforts to build strong local institutions; policy and operational toolkits; the gathering and dissemination of knowledge and best practices regarding technical assistance to Governments, companies and organizations; and the organization of technical workshops and expert group meetings, among others. Existing gaps in the capacity to address multiple cross-sectoral barriers simultaneously are also being tackled by some Member States. United Nations organizations have also provided strong support to Member States in this regard, by leveraging the cross-sectoral expertise within the United Nations system. Examples of specific activities developed in this area include the following:

(a) Austria is leading the Global Network of Regional Sustainable Energy Centres in sub-Saharan Africa, the Caribbean, the Pacific and other regions, with a view to increasing capacities and regional cooperation to mitigate existing barriers to renewable energy and energy efficiency investment, markets and industries;

(b) Germany is conducting a variety of capacity-building activities under bilateral partnerships, with a focus on Africa. These include study tours, expert workshops and thematic events to discuss aspects such as the integration of renewable energies into the markets, access to energy, off-grid solutions and energy efficiency, among others. These activities bring together high-level government representatives, as well as experts from academia, the private sector and civil society;

(c) India has pointed out the need for strengthening capacities to improve coordination between national, regional and local policies, as well as for tailoring policies to the specificities of individual regions and states. The appointment of a single Minister of State for Power, Coal, New and Renewable Energy and Mines has been a major step in this direction;

(d) The Mexican Energy Innovation Centres are research centres focused on geothermal energy, solar energy, wind energy, marine energy and bioenergy, which seek to bring together the academic, industrial and governmental sectors in order to develop technologies, products and services to achieve the potential of renewable energy in Mexico;

(e) In its national energy policy, Slovakia highlights its priorities to strengthen capacity-building efforts, including the need to enhance the quality of information and education on energy efficiency;

(f) Several countries are focusing their efforts on the development of knowledge tools that enhance best practices and information-sharing. These tools include the National Atlas of Feasible Areas for Renewable Energy Development of Mexico, a technological tool that provides up-to-date information on the potential for renewable energy by geographic areas, and an online platform developed by Monaco that brings together relevant information related to the country's energy transition;

(g) The Economic Commission for Europe, through its Committee on Sustainable Energy and subsidiary bodies, implements and supports a variety of activities in the field of sustainable energy and its cross-cutting areas, including the project "Pathways to sustainable energy", which aims to facilitate policy dialogue and explore policy pathways, and the project "Methane management in extractive industries", which aims to increase the capacity of States members of the Commission to measure, report, verify and reduce methane emissions in key energy-related extractive industries;

(h) The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, through the implementation of a project on building capacities in developing appropriate green technologies for improving the livelihood of rural communities, supports the diffusion of green energy technologies in rural areas, improves capacity-building by working in the public sector and municipalities and facilitates knowledge-sharing;

(i) The United Nations Environment Programme hosts the Copenhagen Centre on Energy Efficiency, a thematic hub for energy efficiency, as a satellite to its Centre on Energy, Climate and Sustainable Development at the Technical University of Denmark;

(j) The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees launched the Global Strategy for Safe Access to Fuel and Energy in 2014, which offers guidance and details innovative approaches and technologies, including clean or fuel-efficient cookers, alternative and sustainable fuels and solar-powered lighting;

(k) The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations has continued to work on its multi-partner programme "Energy-smart food for people and climate", which aims to assist Member States in making the shift to energy-smart agrifood systems;

(l) The Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat coordinates a partnership programme, entitled "Powering the future we want: recognizing leadership and innovative practices in energy for sustainable development", offering a grant in the amount of $1 million to fund future capacity development activities in relation to energy for sustainable development;

(m) During 2015 and 2016,the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, as Secretary of UN-Energy and in cooperation with other United Nations organizations, conducted three regional workshops in Latin America (Panama), Asia (Republic of Korea) and Africa (Ethiopia) on mainstreaming energy Sustainable Development Goals, targets and indicators into national statistical programmes;

In cooperation with other United Nations organizations, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs has coordinated a series of workshops and meetings on the topic of energy, including an expert group meeting on Sustainable Development Goal 7 and its role in mitigating impacts from climate change (Marrakesh, Morocco, 2016) on the margins of the twenty-second session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and a symposium on progress on Sustainable Development Goal 7 and its interlinkages with other Sustainable Development Goal (Bangkok, 2017), jointly organized with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. A series of symposiums and meetings have been planned to be conducted in Asia, Europe, Latin America and Africa in 2017 and 2018.

E. Advocacy

18. Advocacy and outreach are essential tools for many countries in order to promote dialogue on concrete issues, share experiences and inspire genuine leadership to drive innovation, risk-taking and change. Several Member States have reported on national, regional and global consultations and engagements that have resulted in the development of policies and regulations, strengthened international cooperation, and the launch of new partnerships around key issues. Concrete examples include the following:

(a) The Vienna Energy Forum, held in Austria in May 2017, brought together around 1,700 representatives from Governments, business, academia, science and civil society to discuss sustainable energy for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement. The discussions highlighted the multiplier effects of integrated approaches for sustainable development at the national, regional and global levels;

(b) The third annual Berlin Energy Transition Dialogue was held in March 2017, with 2,000 participants from all over the world;

(c) The first Italy-Africa Ministerial Conference, organized in the framework of the Italy-Africa initiative, was held in May 2016 in Rome and laid the foundations to broaden and deepen the possible areas of cooperation with Africa, including energy. The Conference is expected to be held every two years;

(d) Monaco undertook extensive consultations with national stakeholders for the drafting of a white paper on energy transition. Outreach activities, such as a "car-free day", are being promoted in line with the country's energy transition.

19. Stakeholders are also coming together on a myriad of platforms and engagements to advocate for effective solutions. Some examples of such engagements include the Economic Community of West African States Sustainable Energy Week, held in Accra (2016); the Seventh International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development, held in Baku (2016); the meetings of the Energy Ministers of the Group of 20, held in Beijing (2016) and in Hamburg, Germany (2017); the Asia Clean Energy Forum, held in Manila (2017); Expo 2017, held in Astana (2017), which includes an Energy Ministerial Conference, convening within the Eighth International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development; the World Future Energy Summit, held in Abu Dhabi (2017); the Energy Efficiency Global Forum, held in Washington, D.C. (2017); the eighth Clean Energy Ministerial, held in Beijing (2017); the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development, held in Mexico City (2017); European Union Sustainable Energy Week, held in Brussels (2017); and the twenty-second session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Marrakesh, Morocco (2016).

F. Partnerships

20. In line with the global agendas, many Member States and international organizations are taking bold steps to boost cooperation on critical issues related to energy transition, either through the creation of new partnerships or through the strengthening of existing coalitions. Participation of businesses, civil society and academia is being strengthened in all aspects and at every level to mobilize their unique contributions.

21. The following examples include some of the numerous initiatives reported by Member States in this direction:

(a) The Africa-European Union Energy Partnership is a long-term framework for strategic dialogue between Africa and the European Union with the objectives of sharing knowledge, setting political priorities and developing joint programmes on key energy issues and challenges. Through its mapping of existing initiatives and programmes in Africa, the Partnership is providing an essential basis for better coordination and harmonization between the two continents;

(b) The European Union Energy Initiative Partnership Dialogue Facility offers a comprehensive range of services from donor coordination and strategic political dialogue to implementation in partner countries, promoting sustainable energy in Africa, Latin America and Asia. The Partnership Dialogue has fostered African-European dialogue at several high-level events in the course of the Africa-European Union Energy Partnership, advised partner countries on 55 sustainable energy policies, strategies and regulations and is currently supporting 25 renewable energy investment projects representing an expected installed capacity of 221 MW;

(c) The Energizing Development partnership, an initiative currently financed by Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, works with 25 countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America with the objective of reducing energy poverty and increasing access to modern energy services;

(d) The International Solar Alliance initiative, under the leadership of India, is a coalition of more than 120 solar resource-rich countries seeking to massively ramp up solar energy through strengthened cooperation;

(e) Italy is actively engaged in public-private partnerships, such as the International Renewable Energy Agency and the International Partnership for

Energy Efficiency Cooperation, and is leading the Renewable Energy Solutions for the Mediterranean association;

(f) Mexico participates in several international cooperation partnerships on research and technological development, such as the "Mission innovation" initiative, aimed at making clean energy affordable for everyone;

(g) The Russian Federation is actively cooperating with several countries in Europe, Asia, Africa and the Americas in the development of more than 50 joint projects, the construction of gas pipelines, and nuclear and hydroelectric power plants.

(h) The United Nations Partnerships for Sustainable Development Goals online platform provides a transparent mechanism for mobilizing and monitoring commitments to help them to grow from billions to trillions of dollars, for the benefit of billions of people. To date, 352 initiatives have been registered with the platform in support of Sustainable Development Goal 7, with strategic objectives in accordance with the Decade of Sustainable Energy for All;

(i) The Energy Access Practitioner Network, led by the United Nations Foundation, has more than 2,500 members representing small, medium-sized and large clean energy enterprises, civil society, Government and academia and delivers energy services in 170 countries. To date, members of the Network report that they have helped to deliver clean, reliable and affordable energy solutions to millions globally;

Sustainable Energy for All plays an important role in the international landscape in the field of sustainable and renewable energy and has identified segments in which it can create a distinctive value added. These segments are the improvement of the dialogue between energy community stakeholders, the provision of strategies for leaders to deliver clean and affordable energy for all, the arrangement of partnerships and targeted communications. The third Sustainable Energy for All Forum, held in April 2017 in New York, brought together over 1,000 high-level representatives under the theme "Going further, faster — together" towards global energy goals and progress on Sustainable Development Goal 7.

IV. Areas for further action

22. The transformation of the energy system is feasible. The pledges made as part of the new global agendas have accelerated the pace of change. Bold action by Member States and the international community has enabled significant progress towards the achievement of universal access to affordable, reliable and sustainable energy for all.

23. However, achieving the goals established in the new global agendas, especially the 2030 Agenda, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Paris Agreement will require scaled-up efforts in several areas, including:

(a) Bolder policies, regulatory frameworks and incentives which are needed to foster innovation, increase research and technological development and attract investment into sustainable energy;

(b) Improving data availability and consistency, which remain critical challenges to achieving energy transition. Special emphasis should be placed on the improvement of data on energy use, disaggregated, inter alia, by sex and by geography;

(c) Investment, which is at the core of the transition to a sustainable energy future. To unlock investment, a joint effort from all players, both public and private, is needed. Emphasis on long-term planning will be crucial to scaling up the necessary investments, since they ensure investor certainty;

(d) Stronger advocacy, communications and outreach efforts in order to inspire genuine leadership to drive innovation, risk-taking and changes. Special efforts should be made to improve understanding of the links between energy and other development factors, including water, food security, health, education, gender equality and poverty;

(e) Stronger, more effective multi-stakeholder partnerships, which will be crucial to success. Besides creating new alliances, special emphasis should be placed on promoting accountability and transparency of existing ones;

(f) Stronger capacity-building efforts, which are needed for governmental institutions and relevant stakeholders to plan, implement and monitor effective policies, market-based mechanisms, business models, investment tools and regulations with regard to energy. Special attention should be paid to capacity strengthening to coordinate actions addressing multiple cross-sectoral barriers simultaneously.

V. Conclusion and the way forward

24. The Decade of Sustainable Energy for All represents a valuable opportunity for all stakeholders to gather around a common platform to take further action and complement activities and synergies ensuring progress towards the overall objective of sustainable energy for all, leading up to the first review of Sustainable Development Goal 7 on energy at the high-level political forum in 2018.

25. Despite considerable improvements over the past years, crucial challenges remain. Universal access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy services requires increasing the share of renewable energy, improving energy efficiency and expanding and investing in energy infrastructure. Progress in all these areas fell short of what is needed to achieve global objectives by 2030. Moving forward, higher levels of financing and bolder policies, along with the willingness of countries to embrace new technologies on a much more ambitious scale, are needed.

26. The United Nations system stands ready to support Member States as they galvanize efforts to make sustainable energy for all a reality and help to eradicate poverty with a view to sustainable development and global prosperity.